

TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

DECEMBER 8 – 17, 2006

LEADER: MARSHALL ILIFF

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8–17 December 2006
Leader: Marshall Iliff

Guides: Gladwyn and Adolphus James (Tobago), Roodal Ramlal (Trinidad)

Much has been written about the riches that Trinidad and Tobago offer the ecotourist: nesting seabirds, including Red-billed Tropicbird, at Little Tobago Island; the spectacular evening flight of vivid Scarlet Ibis; the short trek to observe the unique and absurd fruit-eating nocturnal Oilbirds in their nesting cave; and, of course, the bonanza of feeding activity that can be seen from the Asa Wright Nature Centre veranda. But this year's trip was filled with many additional highlights.

Tobago—a smaller, lower, and drier island—hosts about half the species of Trinidad. Those that occur are interesting and unique, and prompt lots of “why?” questions for the island biogeographer. The richest forest birding on the island is found in the forest reserve in the central mountains, where we hiked in on Gilpin Trace with our local guide, Gladwyn James, in search of specialties. Almost as soon as we set foot inside the forest we began seeing birds. A Stripe-breasted Spinetail called and then perched out on a vine. A White-throated Spadebill flitted through the undergrowth. Our first White-tailed Sabrewing flitted through the treetops, calling and flashing its striking white tail. A Stripe-breasted Spinetail returned and a White-throated Thrush perched on a nearby vine.

Mellow calls from the undergrowth revealed that Blue-backed Manakins were in the area, and a short blast of tape brought in a responsive female. After we all had good views of the female, tape of the male's display calls brought in a vivid male—jet-black plumage with a perfect triangle of sky-blue on the back, set off by a comical red toupee. Plain Antvireo, Fuscous Flycatcher, Rufous-breasted Hermit, and Golden-olive Woodpecker joined the activity before we advanced any further down the trail. Later on the trail we located Rufous-tailed Jacamars with their formidable spike-like bills; a furtive but lovely Yellow-legged Thrush; and a subtle Yellow-breasted Flycatcher high in some bamboo.

Tobago highlights weren't restricted to Gilpin Trace. Our home base, Cuffie River Nature Retreat, sported lovely Blue-crowned Motmots in the gardens, and morning flights of 100+ Orange-winged Parrots, among others. The finale was our boat trip to Little Tobago Island. A short hike took us to the bird cliffs, where Magnificent Frigatebirds and Brown Boobies wheeled in numbers, with a few Red-footed Boobies among them. Red-billed Tropicbird was the specialty bird which winged past us with rapid flaps and a long undulating tail trailing behind. Our trip back on the glass-bottomed boat gave us a window into the riches below the water's surface as well: a massive brain coral and a kaleidoscope of fish including blue tang, bicolored damsel, black turban, and stoplight parrotfish. On our trip back to the airport we added a new species to the Tobago list—Zone-tailed Hawk—an exciting conclusion to our time on the smaller island.

Although we were impressed with the above-mentioned wonders for which Trinidad is famous, I was equally impressed with the diversity and quality of birds on several other forays—notably that to Nariva Swamp. After a morning birding around Aripo Savanna, we enjoyed lunch in the breeze at a classic palm-strewn sand beach. We arrived at Nariva Swamp a couple of hours later in the hottest part of the day. It was a struggle to force ourselves to look at birds in the brilliant sun and only the sea breeze kept us trying. I knew it would improve as the afternoon cooled, and in the tropics the sun drops quickly. We managed to find a few birds in the heat, including a most unusual leucistic (whitish) Smooth-billed Ani. When a dark cloud passed overhead at 3:30 it signaled a change in activity of the swamp. Birds began appearing all around. Purple Gallinules were spotted clambering up on rice stalks. A Ringed Kingfisher perched on a distant wire and a Yellow Oriole appeared in the grasses. A short squawk from behind us alerted us to two stunning Red-bellied Macaws winging overhead in the afternoon light.

We loaded into the vans and drove back past the marshes that had been dead an hour earlier. Now three Pinnated Bitterns poked their heads above the grass and a Pale-breasted Spinetail sang from nearby. A raptor crossing the road turned out to be a Long-winged Harrier, and as it passed some palms a Yellow-crowned Parrot burst forth and flew past us.

We closed the evening enjoying an Azure Gallinule sitting up on a grassy mound, and watching parrots (including more Red-bellied Macaws) arrive at their evening roost. We enjoyed the spectacles with rum punch in hand, as is the birding tradition here. Our rum punch session on the following night was punctuated by more macaws and the late arrival of a Moriche Oriole. The grand finale came the next night, our last, which was spent in wonderment as thousands of Scarlet Ibis and egrets winged their way towards their evening roost in the Caroni Swamp. We raised our rum punches and toasted to a spectacular week of Trinidad & Tobago birding. Cheers!

ITINERARY

8 Dec 2006 – Arrival in Tobago; first night at Cuffie River Resort

9 Dec 2006 – Birding excursion to Gilpin Trace with Gladwyn. Lunch nearby and a couple birding stops en route back to Cuffie. Evening walk at Cuffie.

10 Dec 2006 – Morning departure for the Hilton Ponds area with Adolphus, with stops at Hilton Ponds and Bon Accord Ponds. Lunch and mid-day birding at the Grafton Estate. Evening walk at Cuffie.

11 Dec 2006 – Morning departure with Gladwyn from Cuffie for our boat trip to Little Tobago Island with Frank's Glass Bottomed boats. After a great hike uphill to the seabird viewpoint, we enjoyed the coral reefs and fish on the return trip. After lunch at Frank's restaurant we headed back towards the airport and managed to find our 100th species—a Zone-tailed Hawk which turned out to be a new species for Tobago. Evening arrival at Asa Wright, with night walk for some.

12 Dec 2006 – First morning at Asa Wright Nature Center (AWNC) where we began the day enjoying the deservedly famous show from the veranda. After breakfast we took a morning walk out the entrance road. Afternoon walk on the Discovery Trail, where we enjoyed dancing manakins and bellbirds.

13 Dec 2006 – Morning on the veranda followed by an 8:30 departure for Blanchisseuse Road. Full day on Blanchisseuse Road.

14 Dec 2006 – Early morning departure for the Aripo Agricultural Station. After a successful morning there, we headed to Manzanillo Beach for lunch. Our afternoon concluded with a great run of birds at Nariva Swamp, highlighted by Azure Gallinule, Long-winged Harrier, and Red-bellied Macaws.

15 Dec 2006 – Morning at Waller Field and Aripo Savanna. Mid-afternoon return to AWNC with a 4:00 p.m. return to Waller Field for night birding. Dinner at Waller Field followed by a night birding excursion on the return.

16 Dec 2006 – Morning walk to Oilbird Cave at AWNC; mid-afternoon break; departure at 1:30 p.m. with stops at Leaf Tosser spot, Trincity Sewage Ponds, and Caroni Rice fields. Brief birding around the boat launch area. Grande finale was the Caroni Swamp boat trip, with rum and punch among the Scarlet Ibis heading to roost.

17 Dec 2006 – Departure for home.

KEY TO BIRD LIST LOCATIONS:

To = Tobago

LT = Little Tobago

Tr = Trinidad

CRNR = Cuffie River Nature Retreat

AWNC = Asa Wright Nature Center

BIRD LIST (217 species)

[Unusual/very scarce/very lucky to see sightings in **bold**. Very rare for the area sightings in *bold italics*.]

TINAMOUS

(h) Little Tinamou (*Crypturellus soui*) – Tr; ssp *andrei*

GREBES

Least Grebe (*Tachybaptus dominicus*) – To, Tr

TROPICBIRDS

Red-billed Tropicbird (*Phaethon aethurus*) – LT; magnificent

PELICANS

Brown Pelican (*Pelecanus occidentalis*) – To, Tr

GANNETS & BOOBIES

Red-footed Booby (*Sula sula*) – LT

Brown Booby (*Sula Leucogaster*) – To, LT

ANHINGAS

Anhinga (*Anhinga anhinga*) – To, Tr

FRIGATEBIRDS

Magnificent Frigatebird (*Fregata magnificens*) – To, Tr, LT

HERONS, EGRETS, & BITTERN

Great Egret (*Ardea alba*) – To, Tr

Tricolored Heron (*Egretta tricolor*) – To, Tr

Little Blue Heron (*E. caerulea*) – To, Tr

Little Egret (*E. garzetta*) – To; two on the Hilton Ponds – a recent colonist of the southern Caribbean

Snowy Egret (*E. thula*) – To, Tr

Cattle Egret (*Bubulcus ibis*) – To, Tr

Striated Heron (*Butorides striatus*) – Tr

Green Heron (*B. virescens*) – To, Tr; one at Nariva Marsh was a Trinidad rarity

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron (*Nyctanassa violacea*) – To

Pinnated Bittern (*Botaurus pinnatus*) – Tr; a great spotting by Roodal

IBISES AND SPOONBILLS

Scarlet Ibis (*Eudocimus ruber*) – Tr

DUCKS, GEESE & SWANS

Black-bellied Whistling-Duck (*Dendrocygna autumnalis*) – To

White-cheeked Pintail (*Anas bahamensis*) – To

Blue-winged Teal (*A. discors*) – To

NEW WORLD VULTURES

Black Vulture (*Coragyps atratus*) – Tr

Turkey Vulture (*Cathartes aura*) – Tr

OSPREY

Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) – To, Tr

HAWKS, EAGLES & KITES

Gray-headed Kite (*Leptodon cayanensis*) – Tr; displaying bird seen distantly 12 Dec

Hook-billed Kite (*Chondrohierax uncinatus*) – To; our second rarest bird of the tour, the one we saw at Hilton Ponds provided one of few records for Tobago.

Pearl Kite (*Gampsonyx swainsoni*) – Tr

Long-winged Harrier (*Circus buffoni*) – Tr; one at Nariva, one at Caroni Rice Fields

White Hawk (*Leucopternis albicollis*) – Tr

Common Black-Hawk (*Buteogallus anthracinus*) – Tr

Great Black-Hawk (*B. urubitinga*) – To

Savanna Hawk (*Heterospizias meridionalis*) – Tr

Gray Hawk (*Buteo nitida*) – Tr; subspecies *nitida*; South American birds (*nitida* group) could be split from the northern *plagiata* group

Broad-winged Hawk (*B. platypterus*) – To; resident subspecies *antillarum* is smaller and streakier than North American migrants

Short-tailed Hawk (*B. brachyururs*) – Tr

Zone-tailed Hawk (*B. albonotatus*) – To, Tr; several on Trinidad, but the one we saw at Barbados Beach turned out to be our rarest find of the trip—a first record for Tobago.

Black Hawk-Eagle (*Spizaetus tyrannus*) – Tr; great scope looks at Waller Field

CARACARAS & FALCONS

Yellow-headed Caracara (*Milvago chimachima*) – To, Tr

Merlin (*Falco columbarius*) – Tr

Peregrine Falcon (*F. peregrinus*) – To

GUANS, CHACHALACAS & ALLIES

Rufous-vented Chachalaca (*Ortalis ruficauda*) – To

RAILS, GALLINULES & COOTS

(h) Gray-necked Wood-Rail (*Aramides cajanea*) – Tr

Sora (*Porzana carolina*) – To; great spotting by Amy at Hilton Ponds

Purple Gallinule (*Porphyryla martinica*) – Tr

Azure Gallinule (*Porphyryla flavirostris*) – Tr; rare but increasingly regular on Trinidad, we had two at Nariva Swamp

Common Moorhen (*Gallinula chloropus*) – To, Tr

JACANAS

Wattled Jacana (*Jacana jacana*) – To, Tr

PLOVERS & LAPWINGS

Southern Lapwing (*Vanellus chilensis*) – To, Tr; first colonized the islands in the 1960s, it is now common

Semipalmated Plover (*Pluvialis semipalmatus*) – Tr

SANDPIPERS & ALLIES

Greater Yellowlegs (*Tringa melanoleuca*) – Tr

Lesser Yellowlegs (*T. flavipes*) – Tr

Solitary Sandpiper (*T. solitaria*) – Tr

Spotted Sandpiper (*Actitis macularis*) – Tr

Ruddy Turnstone (*Arenaria interpres*) – To

Least Sandpiper (*Calidris minutilla*) – Tr

GULLS & TERNS

Royal Tern (*Sterna maxima*) – To, Tr

PIGEONS & DOVES

Rock Pigeon (*Columba livia*) – Tr

Scaled Pigeon (*Patagioenas speciosa*) – Tr

Pale-vented Pigeon (*Patagioenas cayennensis*) – To

Eared Dove (*Zenaida auricularis*) – To, Tr

Common Ground-Dove (*Columbina passerina*) – Tr; two at Waller Field

Ruddy Ground-Dove (*Columbina talpacoti*) – To, Tr

White-tipped Dove (*Leptotila verreauxi*) – To; sounding and looking quite different from Texas birds, the Tobago subspecies is *tobagensis*

Gray-fronted Dove (*L. rufaxilla*) – Tr

PARROTS, MACAWS & ALLIES

Red-bellied Macaw (*Ara manilata*) – Tr

Green-rumped Parrotlet (*Forpus passerinus*) – To, Tr

(h) Lilac-rumped Parrotlet (*Touit batavica*) – Tr

Blue-headed Parrot (*Pionus menstruus*) – Tr

Yellow-crowned Parrot (*Amazona ochrocephala ochrocephala*) – Tr

Orange-winged Parrot (*Amazona amazonica*) – To, Tr

CUCKOOS & ANIS

Mangrove Cuckoo (*Coccyzus minor*) – To, Tr; rare on both islands, we were fortunate to find two at the Bon Accord Ponds and one at the Nariva River

(h) Squirrel Cuckoo (*Piaya cayana*) – Tr

Little Cuckoo (*Piaya minuta*) – Tr

Smooth-billed Ani (*Crotophaga ani*) – To, Tr

Striped Cuckoo (*Tapera naevia*) – Tr; great looks on our second to last day

BARN OWLS

Barn Owl (*Tyto alba*) – Tr

TYPICAL OWLS

Tropical Screech-Owl (*Otus choliba*) – Tr; seen at point-blank range in the spotlight

Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl (*Glaucidium brasilianum*) – To, Tr

OILBIRD

Oilbird (*Steatornis caripensis*) – Tr; a highlight of any trip to AWNC

POTOOS

Common Potoo (*Nyctibius griseus*) – Tr

NIGHTHAWKS & NIGHTJARS

Pauraque (*Nyctidromus albicollis*) – Tr

White-tailed Nightjar (*Caprimulgus cayennensis*) – To, Tr

SWIFTS

Band-rumped Swift (*Chaetura spinicauda*) – Tr; seen distantly from AWNC by some

Gray-rumped Swift (*Chaetura cinereiventris*) – To, Tr

Short-tailed Swift (*Chaetura brachyura*) – To, Tr

Fork-tailed Palm-Swift (*Tachornis squamata/Reinarda squamata*) – To, Tr; around Moriche Palms

HUMMINGBIRDS

Rufous-breasted Hermit (*Glaucis hirsuta*) – To, Tr

Green Hermit (*Phaethornis guy*) – Tr

Little Hermit (*Phaethornis longuemareus*) – Tr

White-tailed Sabrewing (*Campylopterus ensipennis*) – To; a Tobago specialty, we saw several along Gilpin Trace

White-necked Jacobin (*Florisuga mellivora*) – To, Tr

Tufted Coquette (*Lophornis ornata*) – Tr; two quick looks at males, but multiple cooperative females

Blue-chinned Sapphire (*Chlorostilbon notatus/Chlorestes notatus*) – Tr

White-chested Emerald (*Agyrtria brevirostris/Amazilia chionopectus*) – Tr

Copper-rumped Hummingbird (*Saucerottia tobaci/Amazilia tobaci*) – To, Tr

TROGONS

White-tailed Trogon (*Trogon viridis*) – Tr

Violaceous Trogon (*T. violaceus*) – Tr

Collared Trogon (*T. collaris*) – To, Tr

KINGFISHERS

Belted Kingfisher (*Ceryle alcyon*) – To; near Bon Accord

Ringed Kingfisher (*Ceryle torquata*) – Tr

Green Kingfisher (*Chloroceryle americana*) – To

American Pygmy Kingfisher (*Chloroceryle aenea*) – Tr; our last new bird in Caroni Swamp

MOTMOTS

Blue-crowned Motmot (*Motmotus momota*) – To, Tr

JACAMARS

Rufous-tailed Jacamar (*Galbula ruficauda*) – To, Tr

TOUCANS

Channel-billed Toucan (*Ramphastos vitellinus*) – Tr; great looks from the AWNC veranda

WOODPECKERS

Red-crowned Woodpecker (*Melanerpes rubricapillus*) – To, Tr

Red-rumped Woodpecker (*Veniliornis kirkii*) – To

Golden-olive Woodpecker (*Piculus rubiginosus*) – To, Tr

Chestnut Woodpecker (*Celeus elegans*) – Tr; Leonie found our first on a well-timed bathroom break!

Lineated Woodpecker (*Dryocopus lineatus*) – Tr

OVENBIRDS

Pale-breasted Spinetail (*Synallaxis albescens*) – Tr

Stripe-breasted Spinetail (*Synallaxis cinnamomea*) – To, Tr; heard only on Trinidad

Yellow-chinned Spinetail (*Certhiaxis cinnamomea*) – Tr

Streaked Xenops (*Xenops rutilans*) – Tr

Gray-throated Leaf-tosser (*Sclerurus albigularis*) – Tr; one of the more difficult birds of the tour, most of us got a decent look

WOODCREEPERS

Plain-brown Woodcreeper (*Dendrocincla fuliginosa*) – Tr

Olivaceous Woodcreeper (*Sittasomus griseicapillus*) – To; one extremely cooperative bird at Cuffie made up for heard onlies at Gilpin

Straight-billed Woodcreeper (*Xiphorhynchus picus*) – Tr

Cocoa (Buff-throated) Woodcreeper (*Xiphorhynchus susurrans*) – To, Tr

Streak-headed Woodcreeper (*Lepidocolaptes souleyetti*) – Tr; Waller Field

TYPICAL ANTBIRDS

Great Antshrike (*Taraba major*) – Tr

Black-crested Antshrike (*Sakesphorus canadensis*) – Tr; a tour favorite

Barred Antshrike (*Thamnophilus doliatus*) – To, Tr

Plain Antwren (*Dysithamnus mentalis*) – To, Tr

White-flanked Antwren (*Myrmotherula axillaris*) – Tr

White-fringed Antwren (*Formicivora grisea*) – To

(h) Silvered Antbird (*Sclateria naevia*) – Tr

White-bellied Antbird (*Myrmeciza longipes*) – Tr

ANTTHRUSHES & ANTPITTAS

Scaled Antpitta (*Grallaria guatemalensis*) – Tr; it took a lot of work, but a couple of us got views of this skulker which sang to us for an hour

Black-faced Antthrush (*Formicarius analis*) – Tr; another skulking species, but one which we all saw well on two different days

COTINGAS

Bearded Bellbird (*Procnias averano*) – Tr

MANAKINS

White-bearded Manakin (*Manacus manacus*) – Tr

Blue-backed Manakin (*Chiroxiphia lanceolata*) – To

Golden-headed Manakin (*Pipra erythrocephala*) – Tr

TYRANT FLYCATCHERS

Southern Beardless-Tyrannulet (*Camptostoma obsoletum*) – Tr

Forest Elaenia (*Myiopagis gaimardii*) – Tr

Yellow-bellied Elaenia (*Elaenia flavogaster*) – To, Tr

Ochre-bellied Flycatcher (*Mionectes oleagineus*) – To, Tr (leader)

Northern Scrub-Flycatcher (*Sublegatus arenarum*) – Tr

Yellow-olive Flycatcher (*Tolmomyias sulphurescens*) – Tr

Yellow-breasted Flycatcher (*Tolmomyias flaviventris*) – To, Tr

White-throated Spadebill (*Platyrinchus mystaceus*) – To

Bran-colored Flycatcher (*Myiophobus fasciatus*) – Tr; watching from the bushes while George took care of business (our second good “bathroom bird”); heard by all and glimpsed by some when we tried to track it down

Fuscous Flycatcher (*Cnemotriccus fuscatus*) – Tr

Euler’s Flycatcher (*Lathotricus euleri*) – Tr

Olive-sided Flycatcher (*Contopus cooperi*) – Tr; one on Blanch. Rd.

Tropical Pewee (*C. cinereus*) – Tr

Pied Water-Tyrant (*Fluvicola pica*) – Tr

White-headed Marsh-Tyrant (*Arundinicola leucocephala*) – Tr

Bright-rumped Attila (*Attila spadiceus*) – Tr; seen well with an antswarm on our final day

Brown-crested Flycatcher (*Myiarchus tyrannulus*) – Tr

Great Kiskadee (*Pitangus sulphuratus*) – Tr

Boat-billed Flycatcher (*Megarynchus pitangua*) – Tr

Streaked Flycatcher (*Myiodynastes maculatus*) – Tr

Piratic Flycatcher (*Legatus leucophaeus*) – Tr

Sulphury Flycatcher (*Tyrannopsis sulphurea*) – Tr; at the Waller Field Moriche Palms

Tropical Kingbird (*Tyrannus melancholicus*) – To, Tr

Gray Kingbird (*T. dominicensis*) – To, Tr; more common on Tobago, we had just one on Trinidad

White-winged Becard (*Pachyramphus polychopterus*) – Tr; Waller Field

Black-tailed Tityra (*Tityra cayana*) – Tr; male at AWNC on 12 Dec

VIREOS & ALLIES

Chivi Vireo (*Vireo chivi*) – To; CRNR on 11 Dec
Scrub Greenlet (*Hylophilus flavipes*) – To
Golden-fronted Greenlet (*Hylophilus aurantiifrons*) – Tr
Rufous-browed Peppershrike (*Cyclarhis gujanensis*) – Tr

SWALLOWS

Caribbean Martin (*Progne caribbaeus*) – To; Bon Accord ponds
Gray-breasted Martin (*P. chalybea*) – Tr
White-winged Swallow (*Tachycineta albiventer*) – To, Tr; common on Tr, but rare on To; we had two at Castara Beach 9 Dec and one at Barbados Beach 11 Dec.
Southern Rough-winged Swallow (*Stelgidopteryx ruficollis*) – Tr
Barn Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*) – Tr; four over Nariva Marsh

WRENS

Rufous-breasted Wren (*Thryothorus rutilus*) – To, Tr
House Wren (*Troglodytes aedon*) – To, Tr

MOCKINGBIRDS & THRASHERS

Tropical Mockingbird (*Mimus gilvus*) – To, Tr

THRUSHES

Yellow-legged Thrush (*Platycichla flavipes*) – To; Gilpin Trace
Cocoa Thrush (*Turdus fumigatus*) – Tr
Bare-eyed Thrush (*T. nudigenis*) – To, Tr
White-necked Thrush (*T. albicollis*) – To, Tr

GNATCATCHERS

Long-billed Gnatwren (*Ramphocaenus melanurus*) – Tr

NEW WORLD WARBLERS

Tropical Parula (*Parula pitiayumi*) – Tr
Yellow Warbler (*Dendroica petechia*) – To, Tr
American Redstart (*Setophaga ruticilla*) – To, Tr
Masked Yellowthroat (*Geothlypis aequinoctialis*) – Tr
Northern Waterthrush (*Seiurus noveboracensis*) – To, Tr
Golden-crowned Warbler (*Basileuterus culicivorus*) – Tr

BANANAQUIT

Bananaquit (*Coereba flaveola*) – To, Tr

TANAGERS, HONEYCREEPERS & ALLIES

Bicolored Conebill (*Conirostrum bicolor*) – Tr; Caroni Swamp
White-shouldered Tanager (*T. luctuosus*) – Tr
White-lined Tanager (*T. rufus*) – To, Tr
Red-crowned Ant-Tanager (*Habia rubica*) – Tr; AWNC, at ant swarm en route to Oilbirds
Silver-beaked Tanager (*Ramphocelus carbo*) – Tr
Blue-gray Tanager (*Thraupis episcopus*) – Tr
Palm Tanager (*T. palmarum*) – Tr
Trinidad Euphonia (*Euphonia trinitatis*) – Tr; Roodal knew the spot for this one!
Violaceous Euphonia (*Euphonia violacea*) – Tr
Turquoise Tanager (*Tangara mexicana*) – Tr; stunning!
Speckled Tanager (*Tangara guttata*) – Tr
Bay-headed Tanager (*Tangara gyrola*) – Tr
Blue Dacnis (*Dacnis cayana*) – Tr
Green Honeycreeper (*Chlorophanes spiza*) – Tr
Purple Honeycreeper (*Cyanerpes caeruleus*) – Tr
Red-legged Honeycreeper (*C. nitidens*) – To; two visiting Imortelle flowers with Bananaquits en route to Gilpin Trace

BUNTINGS, SPARROWS, SEEDEATERS & ALLIES

Blue-black Grassquit (*Volatinia jacarina*) – To, Tr
Ruddy-breasted Seedeater (*Sporophila minuta*) – Tr; a male at Aripo Agricultural Station was a good find

Black-faced Grassquit (*Tiaris bicolor*) – To
Grassland Yellow-Finch (*Sicalis luteola*) – Tr; two males and a female at Aripo Agricultural Station, where they have been noted in recent years

Red-capped Cardinal (*Paroaria gularis*) – TR; great looks at a pair near the boat dock

SALTATORS, CARDINALS & ALLIES

Grayish Saltator (*Saltator coerulescens*) – Tr

BLACKBIRDS, ORIOLES & ALLIES

Yellow-hooded Blackbird (*Agelaius icterocephalus*) – Tr

Red-breasted Blackbird (*Sturnella militaris/Leistes militaris*) – Tr

Carib Grackle (*Quiscalus lugubris*) – To, Tr

Shiny Cowbird (*Molothrus bonariensis*) – To, Tr

Giant Cowbird (*Molothrus oryzivorus/Scaphidura oryzivora*) – To, Tr

Moriche Oriole (*Icterus chrysocephalus*) – Tr

Yellow Oriole (*Icterus nigrogularis*) – Tr

Yellow-rumped Cacique (*Cacicus cela*) – Tr

Crested Oropendola (*Psarocolius decumanus*) – To, Tr

Leader only:

Limpkin (*Aramus guarauna*)

Parasitic Jaeger (*Stercorarius parasiticus*)

Prothonotary Warbler (*Protonotaria citrea*)

Favorite birds: Blue-backed Manakin (Tobago, 5 votes), Bearded Bellbird (Trinidad, 3 votes), Rufous-tailed Jacamar (Tobago, 3 votes)

Mammals

Red-rumped Agouti (*Dasyprocta agouti*) – Tr

Red-tailed Squirrel (*Sciurus granatensis*) – To; Gilpin Trace

Two-toed Silky Anteater (*Cyclopes didactylus*) – Tr; Caroni Swamp

Greater White-lined (Sac-winged) Bat (*Saccopteryx bilineata*) – TR; the small day-time bat in the forest

Herps

Green Turtle (*Chelonia mydas*) – To

Spectacled Cayman (*Caiman crocodilus*) – Tr

House Gecko (*Hemidactylus frenatus*) – To, Tr

Golden Tegu (*Tupinambis teguixin*) – Tr; AWNC feeders

Common Ground Lizard (*Ameiva ameiva*) – To, Tr

Richard's Anole/Gumangola (*Anolis richardii*) – To; Grafton Estate

Cook's Tree Boa (*Corallus hortulanus cookii*) – Tr; Caroni Swamp

Yellow-throated Frog (*Mannophryne trinitatis*) – a Dendrobatid or “arrow poison” type frog; several other interesting frogs seen as well

Butterflies (31 species)

The below butterflies are those I have been able to identify to species. Those with an asterisk are those that I know some of the group saw.

*Polydamas Swallowtail *Battus poydamas* – Several at CRNR 8 Dec and one at Waller Field 15 Dec.

*White-tailed Patch – A well-known Tobago butterfly, we had a good look at a flyby near

Gilpin Trace 10 Dec. Brilliant green and black with long white tails; flies like a swallowtail.

*Spear-winged Cattleheart *Parides reophilus* – Several seen necatring I nthe forest of AWNC 17 Dec.

*Cloudless Sulphur *Phoebis sennae* – Seen mudpuddling at Hilton Ponds and at several locations thereafter

Large Orange Sulphur *Phoebis agarithe* – Several seen

- *Orange-barred Sulphur *Phoebis philea* – Common AUNC
- Barred Yellow *Eurema daira* – Large numbers (ca. 30) of small, half white and half yellow butterflies were seen in grassy areas around Hilton Ponds 11 Dec. I believe these were *E. daira* despite not seeing the black bar. Could have been another similar species, presumably *Eurema*.
- Ghost Yellow *Eurema albula* – About 3 seen on CRNR trails 8 Dec (ph).
- *Giant Hairstreak *Pseudolycaena marsyas* – One seen near Nariva 14 Dec. Awesome bug, maybe my favorite of the trip, this hairstreak was the size of a Cabbage White. Pale grayish-white below (no sign of dark spots as on St. Vincent ssp.) and brilliant blue above with long tails.
- *Blue Transparent *Ithomia pellucida* – Common at AUNC, with 10 seen 12 Dec (ph).
- *Gulf Fritillary *Agraulis vanillae* – Common along beachfront near Manzanilla Beach-Nariva 14 Dec.
- *Julia *Dryas iulia* – Common
- *Aliphera Heliconian *Eueides aliphera* – Ten on north slope of Blanch. Rd. 13 Dec (ph).
- *Postman *Heliconius melpomene* – Very common
- *Isabella's Heliconian *Eueides isabella* – Five at AUNC 12 Dec (ph).
- *Eighty-nine *Callicore aurelia* – One (ph) and at least 8 seen along Blanch. Rd., including 3 at the radar tower site.
- *Astarte Eight-eight *Callicore astarte* – One (ph) as it perched on tree trunks in a forest clearing at Asa Wright 16 Dec. This was the pretty red one with concentric circle and blue spots below that we found on our way back from the Oilbirds.
- Trinidad Sister *Adelpha cytherea* – One on north slope of Blanchisseuse Rd. 13 Dec looked very much like the picture in Stiling (1999), who cautions that there are 10 other *Adelpha* known from T&T.
- *Red Peacock *Anartia amathea* – Very common
- *White Peacock *Anartia jatrophae* – Common
- *Tropical Buckeye *Junonia evarete* – Common
- Dirce Beauty *Colobura dirce* – One seen as a quick flyby at AUNC 12 Dec and two atop Blanchisseuse Rd. 13 Dec seemed to be chasing one another.
- Orion *Historis odius* – One seen as a quick flyby at CRNR 8 Dec.
- Silverking *Archaeoprepona demophoon* – One seen flying high above Blanch. Rd. 13 Dec. Stilling (1999) lists this species from Trinidad and does not mention other options in that genus.
- St. Lucia Mestra *Mestra cana* – Several seen about Little Tobago Island were tentatively identified as mestras; a check of Stilling (1999) suggested that this was the only possible species.
- *Red Rim *Biblis hyperia* – Common
- *Common Morpho *Morpho peleides* – One (ph) at Blanchisseuse Rd. 13 Dec. Others glimpsed at CRNR 8-9 Dec were either this species or *Caligo*. One near Waller Field 14 Dec.
- **Caligo teucer* – one at CRNR 8 Dec (ph)
- *Carolina Satyr *Hermeuptychia sosybius* (=hermes?) – Books list *H. hermes* for T&T. This form seems to be common both on Tobago and Trinidad. Photos from CRNR 8 Dec.
- *Monarch *Danaus plexippus* – One on Blanchisseuse Rd. 13 Dec. Two at Waller Field 14 Dec.
- Queen *Danaus gilippus* – One seen near Manzanilla Beach 14 Dec.

Dragonflies

- Pin-tailed Pondhawk (*Erythemis plebeja*) – Several at Hilton Ponds
- Great Pondhawk (*Erythemis vesiculosa*) – Several at Hilton Ponds
- Spot-tailed Dasher (*Micrathyria aequalis*) – Common at Hilton Ponds and elsewhere
- Band-winged Dragonlet (*Erythrodiplax umbrata*) – Several seen 14-15 Dec; seen well in scope at Waller Field 16 Dec
- Red-tailed Pennant (*Brachymesia fiurcata*) – A few at Hilton Ponds
- Roseate Skimmer (*Orthemis ferruginea*) – Seen commonly
- Hyacinth Glider (*Miathyria marcella*) – A few around Hilton Ponds
- Wandering Glider (*Pantala flavescens*) – Seen commonly

Other Invertebrates

Tree Crab

Land Crab
Army Ants
Leafcutter Ants
Fireflies